



Strategic Plan

*For The
Washington Citizens'
Commission on Salaries for
Elected Officials*

2007-2009

Setting the salaries of the state's elected officials since 1987

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Cover Photo: Rogelio Burgos

Our Mission

To attract citizens of the highest quality to public service by basing the salaries of the state's elected officials on realistic standards and paying them according to the duties of their office.

Introduction

The Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials is a relatively new organization in state government and has undergone many changes since it began setting the elected officials' salaries in 1987.

This strategic plan provides us with an opportunity to present our achievements and our challenges. It also gives us an opportunity to show how our mission, goals, and objectives support the Governor's GMAP and POG programs.

Yogi Berra says – If you don't know where you're going, you'll wind up some place else. Having a sound plan in place to measure the effectiveness of the services we provide is essential to ensure that our citizens are satisfied with the results of our work – they believe the salaries of their elected officials are fair and appropriate.

The Commission and Its Role in State Government

The Commission was created by the overwhelming passage of HJR 49, the 78th amendment to the Constitution which was approved by the voters on November 4, 1986. This measure removed political considerations in setting the elected officials' salaries and vested that responsibility in an independent, unpaid 16-member citizen commission.

In February 1986, in anticipation of voter approval of the proposed constitutional amendment, the Legislature enacted ESHB 1331 which established the Commission on January 1, 1987. The first rotation of commissioners was appointed on February 15, 1987 and began their work on February 25th.

The Commission is charged with setting the salaries of the following:

- Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, Attorney General, Commissioner of Public Lands, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Insurance Commissioner.
- Members of the Legislature
- Justices of the Supreme Court and judges of the Court of Appeals, Superior courts, and District courts.

See page 19 for a brief history of compensation for our elected officials from statehood to the creation of the Salary Commission.

Our [Logic Model](#) is found on page 22.

Vision

A collaborative salary system that reflects the duties of the elected officials and has the confidence and support of the public.

Mandate

To set the salaries of the elected officials in the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of state government. (Washington State Constitution, Article 28).

Values

Making a difference in Washington State government through:

- Quality service provided with professionalism, pride, and creativity;
- Leadership, respect, and working with others;
- Careful and responsible use of resources; and
- Open, clear, and honest communication.

Staff and commissioners are committed to providing quality services in the most efficient and effective ways possible. Our values guide us in fulfilling our mandate and contribute to the development of a culture of excellence.

Philosophy

Our goal is to have a fair and equitable salary system that attracts citizens of the highest quality to public service and has the confidence and support of our citizens. Commissioners recognize the importance of keeping state elected officials' salaries in line with public officials' salaries in the state. Our philosophy for a sound salary structure is to review salaries regularly and make:

- Equity or alignment adjustments when needed;
- Adjustments to recognize additional duties and responsibilities;
- Cost-of-living increases on a consistent basis; and
- Other adjustments when warranted.

Organization Overview

Commissioners

Sixteen unpaid citizens serve on the Commission. They are selected by two methods:

- Nine members are randomly drawn by the Secretary of State from the rolls of registered voters; one from each congressional district.

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- Seven members are selected jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. These members must have personnel management experience.

Of the seven individuals, five are selected, one each, from the following fields:

- private institutions of higher education;
- business;
- professional personnel management;
- the law; and
- organized labor.

Two individuals are recommended to the President and the Speaker, one by the chair of the State Personnel Resources Board and the other by the presidents of the state's four-year institutions of higher education.

The names of the 16 appointees are submitted to the Governor for formal appointment. Commissioners as of May 2006, are:

Name	Selected From
Debra Alya	Congressional District #6
Scott Baxter	Congressional District #5
Don Boggs	Congressional District #9
Sue Byington, Chair*	State Personnel Resources Board
Dale Carlisle	The Law
Jim Clark	Congressional District #7
Alan Doman***	Congressional District #1
Kathleen Hanson*	Congressional District #4
Kamaria Hightower	Organized Labor
David Holzmeister*	Congressional District #3
Ron Hopkins, Vice Chair	Public Higher Education
Willeam Denton Hornbeck**	Professional Personnel Management
David Irwin	Private Higher Education
Charles Ryan*	Business
Dr. William Schwartz*	Congressional District #2
Shirley Wicks*	Congressional District #8

*Appointment ends June 30, 2006; not eligible for reappointment

**Appointment ends June 30, 2006; eligible for appointment to a second term

***Will be appointed to a second term to the business position through the legislative appointment process

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Commissioners may not be or have an immediate family member who is a state official, public employee, or lobbyist.



March 2005 Commission Meeting in Wenatchee
Back Row (L to R): Alan Doman, Wilean Denton Hornbeck, Scott Baxter, Kamaria Hightower, Shirley Wicks, Dale Carlisle, Kathleen Hanson, and Dr. William Schwartz
Front Row (L to R): Charles Ryan, Carol Sayer, Sue Byington, and Ron Hopkins
Absent: Debra Alyea, Don Boggs, David Holzmeiser, and David Irwin

Commissioners are appointed to a four-year term and terms are staggered to provide continuity of service. No person may serve more than two terms. To serve a second term, a congressional district appointee's name would have to be randomly drawn again or be appointed through the legislative process.

Commissioners do not receive compensation but are reimbursed for expenses.

Staff



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Website

Our website www.salaries.wa.gov provides information about the Commission and its work.

Our Role in the Priorities of Government (POG) and Government Management, Accountability and Performance (GMAP)

On February 21, 2006 Governor Gregoire signed an executive order that calls on state government to build public confidence through the GMAP performance review system.

The Commission's constitutional and statutory mission is to set the salaries of the state's elected officials. This function aligns with and supports POG #10: *Strengthen government's ability to achieve results efficiently and effectively*. Our activities and services contribute to the Result Area *Citizen satisfaction with state government* and High Level Purchase Strategy *Improve decision support for government decision makers*. The Commission is a major decision-making entity in state government. The decisions our commissioners make not only have a big impact on the lives of our elected officials but those decisions (the salaries that are set) become state law and cannot be overturned or changed by the Governor, the Legislature, or even the Commission itself. Only the public has that ability through the referendum process. We work hard to increase citizen satisfaction by fairly and appropriately setting the elected officials' salaries and doing so in a public arena.

Washington's citizens have high expectations from their government and they rightfully expect quality, cost-effective services. From the Commission, they expect a fair and reasonable salary schedule for their elected officials and to be listened to as the Commission conducts its work. They also expect an organization that operates efficiently and treats public funds in a frugal manner.

We know that we have been successful in conducting our work when we meet our statutory deadlines and a referendum opposing the salary schedule has not been filed.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The goals, objectives, and related strategies outlined in this section support our constitutional mandate and agency activity of setting the salaries of the elected officials.

Goal 1: The public is aware of and participates in the salary setting process.

Objective:

- Increase public awareness of the Commission's responsibility for setting the elected officials' salaries.

Strategies:

- Work with the media to bring the Commission's function and activities to the public's attention.
- Use the Commission's website and other websites as appropriate to increase public awareness and participation.
- Continually improve our website to encourage and enhance the public's ability to be involved in the salary setting process.
- Proactively encourage involvement and participation in the salary setting process by the public and the elected officials as well as business, civic, service, and political organizations and their members and constituents.

These strategies are directly related to the agency's activity inventory and core function. They also align with POG statewide result #10 by better informing the public about our work and encouraging their participation in the salary setting process.

Goal 2: Ensure that the agency has sufficient ongoing capacity and resources.

Objectives:

- Build and sustain the necessary capacity in staff.
- Build financial capacity to sustain core services.

Strategies:

- Use technology to streamline processes and to build and share knowledge.
- Provide tools, training, and support that enable staff to succeed.
- Evaluate and improve services and processes.
- Provide clear direction and leadership.
- Creatively manage a two-person staff to provide appropriate office coverage and public access to services.
- Work with the state's financial decision-makers to ensure that adequate funds and FTEs are appropriated.

These strategies are directly related to the agency's activity inventory and core function. They also align with POG statewide result #10 by providing public access to Commission services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Performance Measure for 2007-09

The following performance measure is linked to goal #1 *The public is aware of and participates in the salary setting process* and relates directly to our core function. It aligns with POG Statewide Result #10 by increasing public awareness and confidence in the services we provide. We believe this performance measure will provide meaningful, reliable, and accurate data that can be verified. The cost will be minimal as the data will be collected from a survey completed by visitors to our website.

Performance Measure: The percentage of people visiting our website who believe the salary setting process is fair, open, and accessible.

Measured by: A voluntary survey of visitors to our website.

Performance Assessment

The Commission has sole authority for setting the elected officials' salaries. No other state agency or entity is involved in this work. There are no national or state standards or guidelines for setting salaries.

It is difficult to measure and present the Commission's performance results – the salaries that are set. Ultimately, the public determines whether the salaries are appropriate and expresses their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If the public is dissatisfied with the Commission's actions, they can voice their opposition by overruling the salary schedule through the referendum process outlined in the Constitution. The Commission's work has never been overturned; however, in 1987 a Moses Lake farmer filed a referendum with the Secretary of State but did not submit any signatures.

Performance Measure Gaps

Unfortunately, we found that the performance measures we identified for 2005-07 were not workable.

The measure to determine the percentage of residents who were aware that a citizens' commission has responsibility for determining and setting the elected officials' salaries did not work because funds were not available to conduct a survey. Information to support the performance measure was not available.

The measure to determine the percentage of people who attend our meetings and believe the salary setting process is fair, open, and accessible is, we believe, a good measure of how much confidence the public has in the salary setting process and whether they believe the salaries set are appropriate. Again, funds were not available for a survey. Another problem with this measure was the fact that very few people attend our meetings and of those that did attend, we were unable to contact them because we do not collect personal information from them.

In 2007-09, we will again use a measure to inquire about the public's perception of the fairness of the salaries but will initiate a more workable and affordable data compilation process. Staff of the Department of Information Services redesigned our website to make it more user friendly. Our website will include a brief survey of our visitors. We will ask visitors to respond to a question that measures whether they believe the process is fair, open, and accessible. The question ties directly to our core function and aligns with POG #10 by measuring citizen satisfaction.

Operational Analysis

The Commission is directed by statute to conduct its salary setting work in January through early June of each odd-numbered year. A large amount of work must be completed in a very short period of time. One of our greatest successes and also our biggest challenge has been to creatively manage our resources to support the Commission in its work and responsibly manage the agency.

Also challenging is the fact that many of our citizens are unaware that the Commission has responsibility for setting their elected officials' salaries. We have diligently worked with the media to try to get coverage and educate the public but unless a topic is controversial, there is little media interest. We also proactively encourage the involvement and participation in the salary setting process by the public, the elected officials, and business, civic, service and political organizations and their members and constituents. In spite of these efforts, attendance at our meetings is poor and the lack of public input into the salary setting process disappointing. In discussions with staff of other boards and commissions, we have learned that they, too, have difficulty getting public interest unless a controversial issue is involved. It is troubling that we hear from the public after the fact if they are unhappy about the Commission's decisions

Strategies and Focus Areas

This section explains how staff's work contributes to our core function and ancillary activities and supports High Level Purchase Strategy: *Improve decision support for government decision makers.*

- Setting the salaries of the elected officials;
- Managing the agency; and
- Educating the public.

For additional information about these activities, see our [Logic Model](#) on page 22.

To be successful, staff must continually improve and find innovative ways to accomplish our work and to inform and involve the public in order to establish their trust and confidence that their elected officials' salaries are fair and appropriate.

Efficiently and Effectively Setting the Salaries of the Elected Officials

- Build capacity by providing timely, accurate information to commissioners, enabling them to make informed decisions.
- Build capacity through attention to detail and quality services to commissioners in all Commission-related aspects such as appointments and making travel and meeting arrangements.
- Increase the elected officials' awareness and participation through better communication.

Managing to Capacity

- Build financial capacity through astute budgeting and management of funds.
- Enhance capacity by ensuring that the agency has adequate facilities to fulfill its mission and that staff have a safe and secure work environment.
- Build capacity by providing training and support of staff.
- Support and enhance the capacity of staff through computer systems and programs and introduce or increase automation and electronic use whenever possible.
- Increase responsiveness to the public and stakeholders through highly skilled, knowledgeable staff.

Educating the Public, Increasing their Involvement, and Building their Confidence

- Increase awareness of services and activities through our website and the state's Access Washington website.
- Increase awareness of services through publications and community outreach.
- Increase and enhance media coverage by providing timely, informative materials about our services and activities.
- Increase public participation in the salary setting process through the media, websites, and brochures and publications.

Appraisal of the External Environment

We have worked hard to establish our reputation as a reliable, ethical, credible, and professional organization that sincerely cares about our customers and provides high quality, exceptional service. We are viewed as an enterprising organization that gets things done.

Our Clients

Our customers are the public and the elected officials whose salaries we set. One of our goals is to increase public awareness and participation in the salary setting process. We encourage public participation through our website, listserv, and in publications and media announcements. Building public confidence in the salary system and satisfaction that tax dollars are being spent wisely is imperative to our success.

We do not envision much, if any, change in our customer base, characteristics, or trends. The elected officials for whom we set salaries are established in Article 28 of the Constitution and a constitutional amendment would be required to make changes.

The Commission sets the salaries of the following elected officials:

Executive Branch	9
Governor	
Lieutenant Governor	
Secretary of State	
Treasurer	
Auditor	
Attorney General	
Superintendent of Public Instruction	
Commissioner of Public Lands	
Insurance Commissioner	
Legislative Branch	147
Members of the House (98)	
Members of the Senate (49)	
Judicial Branch	323
Supreme Court Justices (9)	
Court of Appeals Judges (22)	
Superior Court Judges (181)	
District Court Judges (111)	
Total Positions	479

Changes in the Authorizing Environment

We do not envision any changes to our operation due to federal, state, or local actions or activities. We also do not envision additional positions being included. The positions for which the Commission has salary setting authority are identified in the Constitution and statute. The number of superior and district court judges can increase due to case loads however that does not affect the Commission's work as these judges' salaries are set as a group.

Major Partners

The Commission's function is unique in state government and we do not have any partners in conducting our work. The State Committee on Agency Officials' Salaries (SCOAS) evaluates the jobs of the appointed agency heads and makes salary recommendations to the Governor. The work of the Commission and SCOAS is somewhat similar with the exception that SCOAS makes recommendations to a higher authority and the salaries set by the Commission become state law. Another difference is that the Commission involves the public in its work and holds hearings in cities around the state to provide maximum citizen access to the decision-making process. Individuals who are unable to attend our meetings, are encouraged to send their comments via phone, fax, mail, or email.

The 2001 Legislature authorized local governmental jurisdictions to establish commissions to set the salaries of their elected officials. We have provided information and resources to a number of cities and counties interested in establishing a salary commission.

Needs and Expectations of Clients

There is a perception among some Washington citizens that their elected officials' salaries are too high and may not be comparable with other public positions. This may, in part, be due to the fact that the salaries of other public officials in the state are rarely in the news, making it difficult for the public to compare salaries. To correct these misconceptions, we present comparable, peer salary data on our website to provide the public with factual information about public sector salaries in Washington.

The Commission recognizes that it is important not only to keep the elected officials' salaries in line with their peers but to listen to and involve the public in the salary setting process. One of our goals is to increase public awareness of the Commission. Many people are unaware that a citizens' commission sets their elected officials' salaries. The strategies we have identified are tools that will assist us in educating the public, increase their involvement in the salary setting process, and ultimately establish their confidence in the salary setting system.

The public policy of the state, as defined in statute, is to base the salaries of public officials on realistic standards in order to attract the best qualified citizens to public service. The elected officials' expectations are that the Commission will carefully consider the duties of their respective positions and set salaries that are appropriate for those duties. Citizen expectations are that the Commission will spend taxpayer dollars wisely and frugally and that high-quality people will represent them.

Improving Service to Clients

Many people have an unrealistic or uninformed opinion of what their state officials should be paid. This perception has been difficult to overcome and can result in angry citizens when salaries are increased. However, the reality is that these jobs affect the lives of every citizen in our state. The Commission and the elected officials need to work harder to convey to the public that it is important to provide adequate and appropriate compensation for their elected officials.

Improving customer service is important to us. Our website has been remodeled to make navigation easier and to provide information in a more user friendly atmosphere. We are also revising our publications to better inform the public about the services we provide. We established wccseo-info@listserv.wa.gov on the Access Washington website to provide the public with information about the Commission. We will use those tools to continue to encourage public participation in the salary setting process.

Trends in Salary Administration

In conducting their salary setting business, commissioners consider many factors and a great deal of data, including peer salaries for positions in other states. While it is useful to review salaries in other states, commissioners have been cautious about this data because the duties of peer positions across the nation vary from state to state and the compensation philosophy varies as well.

Some of the best comparable data has been the salaries of public positions within Washington. It is interesting to note that salaries of elected and non-elected positions in city and county government in Washington are often higher than peer salaries in state government. That has been the trend for the last ten years or so. In some cases the state is losing qualified people to other jurisdictions and private firms because of this salary gap. This is particularly true of the Judicial Branch where some of the best judges are leaving the bench to work for private mediation and arbitration firms. Legislators have testified before the Commission that they, too, are losing good members because their job is becoming more of a full-time position and the salary is not keeping up.

The Commission recognizes these problems and has begun to bring the elected officials' positions into alignment with their bench mark positions. In some instances, the gap is large and it will take years to achieve alignment.

In 2004, the Commission contracted with a consultant to study the salaries of the positions in the legislative and judicial branches of government using the Willis Point Factor Evaluation System. This system has been used by the state of Washington to determine appropriate salaries of executive and managerial positions since the mid-1970's.

Based on the consultant's study and recommendations, the 2005 Commission adopted a two-year salary schedule that begins to align the position of legislator with positions in the state's Exempt Management System and begins to align our judges with those on the federal bench.

The Executive Branch positions were evaluated in 2003 and will be reevaluated prior to our 2007 salary setting session. A good benchmark for these positions is the salaries of the appointed agency heads in state government.

Use of the Willis Point Factor Evaluation System to evaluate the elected officials' positions provides the Commission with factual, objective data to make decisions that ensure salaries will attract and retain qualified individuals in state service. It also provides consistency in compensation practices for executive positions in state government. While the last two commissions have found the Willis System useful, those in the future are not bound by the actions of prior commissions.

Meeting the Requirements of Government

Meeting the requirements of state agencies for standards, policies and procedures, plans, and rules and regulations can present major challenges to very small agencies such as the Salary Commission. We often do not have the technical expertise in-house to comply with these requirements nor do we have funds to hire outside experts to do the work.

Our agency and other small agencies receive financial and payroll support from the Office of Financial Management's Small Agency Client Services (SACS). Since our move to the General Administration Building, we receive, as part of our lease agreement, information technology service/support and training, access to large and

small conference rooms, building security, and reliable and professional janitorial services. These services are excellent but we need help in other areas.

Three areas where support from another government entity would be beneficial and provide much needed support to small state agencies (both cabinet and non-cabinet agencies) are:

- **Legislative Coordination** – Support to be our eyes and ears with respect to proposed legislation, hearing schedules, and other legislative issues. Many agencies have staff to perform this function and keep their managers apprised of what is happening. We have no one and it can hurt us.
- **Policy and Rules Coordinator** – Support to keep us abreast of the requirements of state government. We can find ourselves unaware of rules/regulations, mandatory contracts, directives, etc., that we must follow and/or implement. Making us aware of these requirements and providing sample or template language would save us time, effort, and frustration.
- **Best Practices** – Support on how to effectively implement best practices in a very small organization. We hear about the large agencies' successes but do not have good information about implementing them on a small scale. We do utilize the Department of Information Services' Tech Mall for software and equipment purchases and believe there may be other areas where larger agencies can provide services to smaller organizations like ours.

Assessment of Internal Capacity

The Salary Commission continues to emphasize innovative and collaborative approaches to serving clients. An ongoing challenge, however, is the need to improve our ability to manage workloads, especially during the Commission's salary setting sessions, with a two-person, half-time staff.

Our capable and committed employees form one of our main strengths. A dedicated staff, combined with a solid infrastructure and a flexible organization, have allowed us to overcome enormous obstacles. We must now place a priority on enhancing our internal structure to manage workload and to foster strong working relationships.

Commissioners are committed to meeting the mandate of the public by setting salaries that are based on realistic standards, are fair, and reflect the duties of the positions.

Commitment

Commitment is critical to our success. We:

- Are energized, committed, and work hard to ensure our success.
- Use our energy, skills, experience, and creativity to achieve results.
- Do our jobs because we want to.
- Follow through on problems and issues to ensure they are resolved.

- Are action-oriented and are willing to take risks.
- Are highly involved and attached to our organization.

Staff Support

The Commission's current biennial operating level is 1.3 FTEs. Our agency is staffed by two half-time people. Both positions are exempt from civil service. The director serves at the pleasure of the Commission and the executive assistant serves at the pleasure of the director.

In a very small agency, the retention of highly trained and skilled employees is especially critical. Continuity of staff support and ensuring consistent, high quality research to commissioners is essential to our success.

This plan, and our 2007-09 funding request, reflects our ongoing efforts to operate in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. However, our ever increasing workload, especially in preparation for and during the salary setting session, keeps stretching our ability to do so.

We must work to ensure that budgetary decision-makers understand the importance of the Commission's work and will support a funding level that meets the needs and expectations of the public and the elected officials whose salaries are set and provides quality staff support to the Commission.

Technology

One of our greatest obstacles for years was a lack of information technology expertise. The risk we posed to the state's computer systems was very real. These concerns have been eliminated with our move to the General Administration Building. Under the terms of our lease, we receive excellent information technology support from General Administration staff, including:

- IT Portfolio Management support;
- IT Security Policy Support;
- Desktop and mobile PC support;
- Network support;
- Telephone service and support;
- MS Enterprise licenses for our desktop operating programs; and
- Training.

We have been on a three-year computer equipment replacement cycle and will continue that cycle as long as it is prudent to do so. Our computers were replaced in 2005. We do not operate any sophisticated systems and are connected to the Department of Information Services' systems via General Administration servers.

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Salary Setting Operational Work Plan and Action Steps

Statute defines how and when the Commission conducts its work. Following are some of the major tasks and responsibilities that will be involved in the 2007 salary setting session.

Activity: Set the Salaries of the Elected Officials		
Task	Responsible Party	Completion Date
Coordinate commissioner appointments	Staff	July 2006
Two-day orientation of new and current members	Staff/Commissioners	September 2006
Preparation of comprehensive salary and economic data for commissioners' decision-making	Staff	August-November 2006
Organizational meeting for the 2007 salary session and adoption of the 2007 meeting schedule	Staff/Commissioners	November 2006
Publish the 2007 Meeting Schedule in the <i>Washington Register</i>	Staff	December 2006
Public hearing, work session, and adoption of a proposed salary schedule for 2007-08	Staff/Commissioners	January 2007
Public hearing and work session	Staff/Commissioners	February 2007
Public hearing and work session	Staff/Commissioners	March 2007
Public hearing and work session	Staff/Commissioners	April 2007
Public hearing and work session; adopt final 2007-08 salary schedule	Staff/Commissioners	May 2007
Inform media and the elected officials of the new salary schedule	Staff	May 2007
File 2007-08 schedule with the Secretary of State and Code Reviser for codification in RCW 43.03.011	Staff	First Monday in June 2007
Conference call meeting to approve May meeting minutes	Staff/Commissioners	June 2007
90-day period for voters to file a referendum to overturn the salary schedule	Voters	Late August 2007
2007-08 salary schedule takes effect	Elected Officials	September 2007 & September 2008
Notify elected officials regarding second year (2008) salary increases (if made)	Staff	August 2008

Internal Environment – Challenges and Achievements

Flexibility and adaptability are key to our success. We must continually seek new, innovative, and effective ways to creatively and efficiently manage our resources.

Our biggest challenge from the Commission's inception in 1987 until 1999 was the way we operated. During that time, the agency was staffed and operational for about six months during the salary setting session. The lack of staff continuity from session to session and having to continually "reinvent" the wheel for every salary setting session resulted in a disorganized and inefficient operation. Not having operating WACs, internal policies and procedures, or much of the documentation required of a state government agency also created problems. Immediately after the salary setting session, staff closed the office and put valuable files and equipment into storage, hoping they would still be there for the next group. The Commission was invisible and no one was able to contact us during the interim period. Two lawsuits were filed against us by a citizen activist group because of our lack of operational stability and public access.

Changes were made as preparations began for the 1999 session. The Commission's chair determined that there was a need for continuity of staff from one session to the next, that public accessibility was imperative, and that operating policies and procedures were necessary. A year-around office was established and staffed with one employee on a part-time basis.

Another major obstacle that we have overcome is commissioners' terms. The legislation that created the Commission did not call for staggered terms. From the first group of commissioners on, the problem of all commissioners' terms beginning and ending on the same date received considerable discussion and recommendations to stagger terms. New Commissioners were appointed on February 15th of the odd-numbered year and had to begin their work within weeks of their appointment.

In 1999, the Legislature approved a Commission request to stagger members' terms. Eight members are now appointed or reappointed every two years instead of all 16 appointments occurring every four years with the very real possibility of a complete turnover of members. The appointment date was moved back six months. This action was a major, positive change and resulted in member continuity and better planning for the salary setting business. It enables staff to conduct training for commissioners and to provide them with the knowledge and tools they need to operate as an official of the state before they begin their work instead of "learn as you go" as had been the case.

The important and much needed task of adopting operating rules (WACs) and policies and procedures was accomplished in 2001.

The Salary Commission has been co-located with the minority commissions since 2001. In 2005, our agencies moved to joint space in the General Administration Building. Sharing common facilities and equipment works well, is cost-effective, and we receive needed services through our lease with the Department of General Administration. Another benefit is that staff has a safe and secure work environment.

Of concern to commissioners over the years has been the lack of factual, objective data on which to base their decisions. We are utilizing the Willis Point Factor Evaluation system to assist commissioners in determining appropriate salaries. The judicial and legislative positions were evaluated in 2005 and the executive branch positions will be evaluated prior to the 2007 salary setting session.

Since 1999, the agency has operated on a year-around, part-time basis. This arrangement has worked well, is cost-effective, and provides the services and availability the public expects of its government and the continuity, professionalism, and support the Commission requires to effectively and efficiently do its job.

Assessment of Financial Health

An adequate level of funding and an appropriate FTE allocation is necessary to successfully conduct our business. Without sufficient funding, we may be unable to meet our constitutional mandate, citizens may become dissatisfied with our services, and ultimately the careers and personal lives of the elected officials may be adversely impacted.

The Commission has been an organization in transition since 1999 when it established a permanent office and hired year-around staff. Since that time, we have been learning what it takes in resources (both financial and staff) to successfully conduct the business of setting the elected officials' salaries and efficiently and effectively operate the agency.

Inadequate funding in FY 2004 resulted in a reduction in hours of operation and public access which was in violation of the Public Records Act. The Commission requested and received supplemental funding from the Legislature to operate and staff the office at 50 percent. Our funding since then has been for two employees, half-time. If the agency's funding level remains the same, we can maintain our current level of service and will strive to make improvements. However, It should be noted that even with creative and innovative time management, we barely meet office coverage requirements and meeting the needs and demands of other government agencies in a timely manner can be overwhelming.

The risks of inadequate funding are:

- The salary setting business may not be conducted as prescribed in statute. The personal lives of the elected officials would be adversely impacted if the Commission were unable to conduct its business.
- If salaries for the elected officials were not reviewed and adjustments made for several biennia, large catch-up increases would need to be made, resulting in angry citizens.
- The agency may be out of compliance with required state laws, rules, regulations, directives, or policies and procedures, resulting in audit findings, lawsuits, or other significant problems.

Looking Toward the Future 2009-13

Our mission is to meet the constitutional mandate of the citizens of Washington by openly, efficiently, and appropriately setting the salaries of the state's elected officials. We are not aware of any external environment or customer characteristics that would affect our mission or our budget.

Our core function of setting the elected officials' salaries is not expected to change in the future nor is the process that is defined in statute. The current level of funding and FTE allocation is sufficient to operate on a part-time basis. However, it is very difficult to predict specific future needs and, at some point in the future, we may need to transition into a more full-time operation to meet the staff support required by commissioners, the requirements of doing business as a state agency, and the needs of the public. These activities and requirements are ever increasing and complex.

Planning is underway for renovation of the General Administration Building. That project would require the Commission to move from its present location on the third floor during the renovation and then relocate back to the General Administration building or to another site when the project is completed. This is a large, unknown factor and additional funding may be needed during that transition.

Not even the experts can predict what our business world will be like in the future. However, we can be assured that continual changes in technology will have a huge impact on how we conduct our business. The complexity of our work environment and an unknown economic future may have a dramatic impact on how we operate. We must be prepared to adapt to change and to utilize new and improved technologies to provide the services our citizens expect in an efficient and cost-effective manner and the knowledge and expertise required to fairly and appropriately set the elected officials' salaries.

Legal Authority

Washington Constitution (Article 28)

Salaries for members of the legislature, elected officials of the executive branch of state government, and judges of the state's supreme court, court of appeals, superior courts, and district courts shall be fixed by an independent commission created and directed by law to that purpose.

Chapter 43.03.300 RCW

The legislature hereby declares it to be the policy of this state to base salaries of elected state officials on realistic standards in order that such officials may be paid according to the duties of their offices and so that citizens of the highest quality may be attracted to public service. It is the purpose of RCW 43.03.300 through 43.03.310 to effectuate this policy by creating a citizens' commission to establish proper salaries for such officials,

thus removing political considerations in fixing the appropriateness of the amount of such salaries.

Chapter 43.03.305 RCW

There is created a commission to be known as the Washington citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials, to consist of 16 members appointed by the governor as provided in this section.

Chapter 43.03.310 (1) RCW

The citizens' commission on salaries for elected officials shall study the relationship of salaries to the duties of members of the legislature, all elected officials of the executive branch of state government, and all judges of the supreme court, court of appeals, superior courts, and district courts and shall fix the salary for each respective position.

Elected Officials' Compensation History in Washington

The original Washington Constitution specified a salary for each elected official of the Executive Branch and the daily compensation and travel allowance to be paid to members of the Legislature. The salaries of the state-supported judges were prescribed by law.

In 1948, the voters adopted the 20th amendment to the Constitution, creating Article 28, Section 1. That section authorized the Legislature to establish the compensation received by all elected state officials.

In 1955, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Salaries was established to study the duties and make salary recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature for the directors of state agencies, members of boards and commissions, and all state elected officials.

In 1956, the voters approved the 31st amendment to the Constitution (Article 3, Section 25). It stated that compensation for state officers could not be increased or diminished during the term for which they were elected.

In 1968, the voters approved the 54th amendment to the Constitution (Article 30, Section 1) which allowed the compensation of elected officials to be increased during their term of office.

In 1970, the Legislature established the State Committee on Salaries, replacing the Governor's Advisory Committee. The State Committee on Salaries was directed to study the duties of the elected state officials as well as the directors of state agencies and members of boards and commissions and to report salary recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature, in each odd-numbered year.

Between 1974 and 1985, five measures were introduced in the Legislature to create an independent salary-setting authority.

In 1974 the first constitutional amendments were introduced. The House proposal applied only to members of the Legislature and the Senate proposal applied to all state elected officials. Neither was enacted.

In 1975, two resolutions were again introduced. Following enactment of SSJR 127 by the Legislature in June 1975, the measure was submitted to the voters in the November general election. It did not pass.

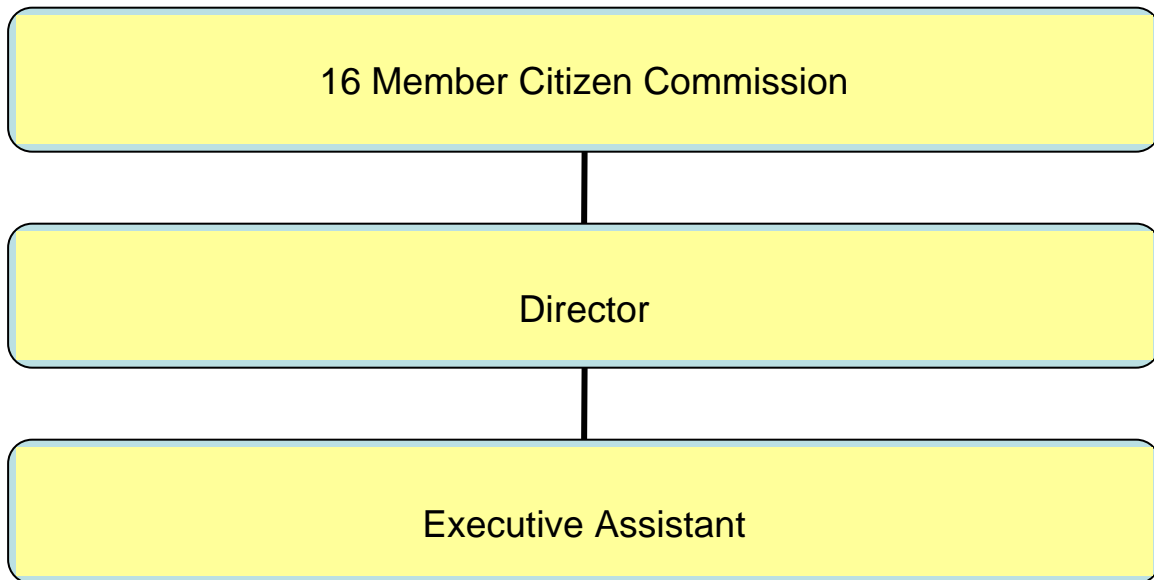
In the 1985 session, a measure was introduced to amend the Constitution to create an independent salary-setting authority whose determinations would be effective without legislative approval. It did not pass.

The 1986 Legislature enacted ESHB 1331 to establish the Commission on January 1, 1987 providing that the public approved HJR 49 at the November general election.

At the general election held on November 4, 1986, the voters overwhelmingly approved HJR 49, the 78th amendment to the Constitution which created the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials. The Commission began the business of setting the elected officials' salaries in February 1987.

The 1986 Legislature also eliminated the State Committee on Salaries and established the State Committee on Agency Officials' Salaries (SCOAS). That committee reviews the salaries of state agency heads and members of boards and commissions who are appointed by the Governor and recommends a maximum salary for each position.

Organization Chart



Commissioners

Commissioners are volunteers and are selected by two methods:

- Nine are randomly drawn by the Secretary of State from the rolls of registered voters, one from each congressional district.
- Seven are selected jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. Five individuals are selected, one each, from the following fields: private institutions of higher education, business, professional personnel management, the law, and organized labor. Two individuals are recommended to the President and the Speaker, one by the chair of the State Personnel Resources Board and the other by the presidents of the state's four-year institutions of higher education.

The names of the 16 appointees are submitted to the Governor for formal appointment to a four-year term. The members selected by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House must have personnel management experience.

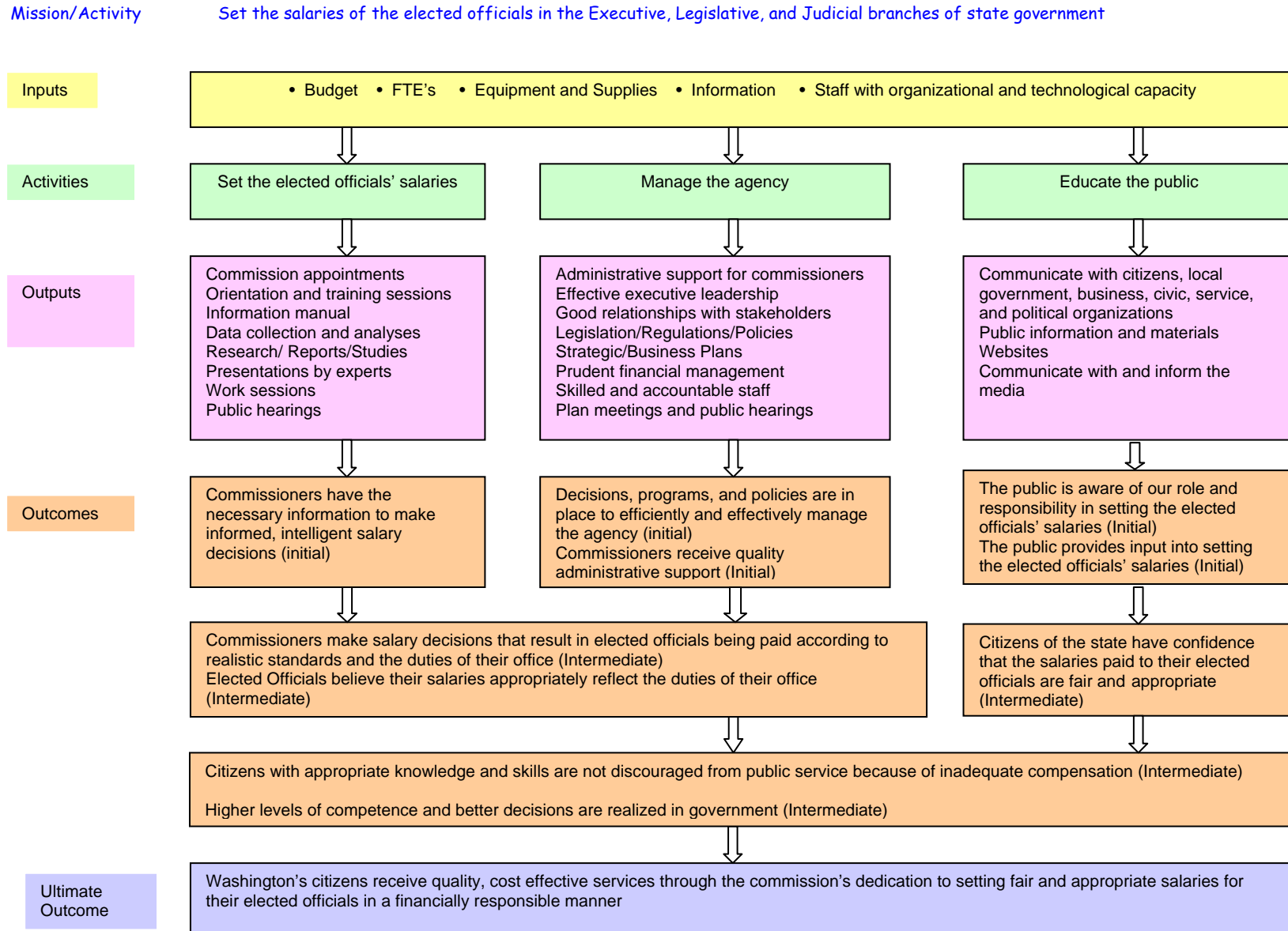
The Commission elects its chair and vice-chair.

Staff

Both staff positions are exempt from civil service. The director is hired by the chair and serves at the pleasure of the Commission. The executive assistant is hired by and serves at the pleasure of the director.

2007-09 Strategic Plan for the Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials

Logic Model



2005-06 Salary Schedule

Position	Salary Effective September 1, 2005	Salary Effective September 1, 2006
<i>Executive Branch</i>		
Governor	148,035	150,995
Lieutenant Governor	77,382	78,930
Secretary of State	103,736	105,811
Treasurer	103,736	105,811
Auditor	103,736	105,811
Attorney General	134,577	137,268
Superintendent of Public Instruction	105,861	107,978
Commissioner of Public Lands	105,861	107,978
Insurance Commissioner	103,736	105,811
<i>Judicial Branch</i>		
Supreme Court Justices	141,394	145,636
Court of Appeals Judges	134,598	138,636
Superior Court Judges	128,143	131,988
District Court Judges	122,012	125,672
<i>Legislative Branch</i>		
Legislator	35,254	36,311
Speaker of the House	43,254	44,311
Senate Majority Leader	43,254	44,311
House Minority Leader	39,254	40,311
Senate Minority Leader	39,254	40,311

Notes:

1. The Salary Schedule for 2005-06 was adopted at an open public meeting on May 19, 2005 and granted a 2% increase effective September 1, 2005 and September 1, 2006 for all positions in the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative Branches of state government.
2. In addition, the Commission granted a 1.0% increase for 2005 and 2006 to positions in the judiciary to begin to bring them into alignment with the Federal bench.
3. The Commission also granted a 1.0% increase for legislators for 2005 and 2006 to begin to bring the position of legislator in line with the positions in the Exempt Management Service (EMS). The legislative leadership stipend (\$8,000 and \$4,000) is added to the base legislator pay for these positions.



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